

STILLWATER STATE FOREST
PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT NOTICE
June 14, 2006

RE: Shorts Meadow/Evers Creek Timber Sale Project Proposal

The Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC), Stillwater Unit, is proposing the Shorts Meadow/Evers Creek Timber Sale Project. DNRC is in the initial stages of public involvement and project development for the environmental assessment that would cover the harvest proposal of two or three million board feet of sawtimber in harvest units including 300 to 400 acres. This project is part of an ongoing effort to produce revenue for the school trust and maintain a healthy and productive forest into the future.

The State school trust lands being considered include all or portions of Sections 13, 14, and 24, Township 31 north, Range 24 west.

DNRC is interested to know your issues or concerns about the project(s) and areas. This notice initiates a 30-day comment period providing an opportunity for the public to get involved at the initial stages of the project. This early involvement provides information that will enable DNRC to identify issues and carry out the first stages of the analysis process. If we do not receive communication from you during the comment period, your name will be removed from our address list for this project.

The project proposal, maps, and general information are enclosed. The comment period will remain open until July 14, 2006. Please comment by calling Pete Evans (406)-881-2675 or Bob Traina (406)-881-2667 (email: pevans@mt.gov or btraina@mt.gov) or writing to Stillwater State Forest, P.O. Box 164, Olney Montana 59927 in care of Pete or Bob.

Sincerely,

Brian Manning
Unit Manager
Stillwater State Forest
P.O. Box 164
Olney, Montana 59927

BM:pe/mb
Enclosures
cc: Project file

**SHORTS MEADOW/EVERS CREEK
TIMBER SALE PROJECT PROPOSAL
June 14, 2006**

The Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) has the responsibility of managing State school trust lands. The primary purposes of this timber sale project are to provide income for the school trust, regenerate new stands of healthy trees, improve the growth and vigor of trees remaining in timber stands, and reduce fire hazard.

The project design will follow *Montana's Administrative Rules for Forest Management* (Annotated Rules of Montana 36.11.401 through 36.11.450) and will be based on the premise that for the foreseeable future timber management will continue to be the primary source of revenue from these parcels of land. DNRC also works under the State Forest Land Management Plan (SFLMP) philosophy that timber management will be the primary tool for achieving biodiversity objectives on State forestlands.

The school trust lands being considered for the Shorts Meadow/Evers Creek Timber Sale Project Proposal include portions of Sections 13, 14, and 24 in T31N, R24W. The lands involved in this proposed project are held by the State of Montana in trust for the support of the School for the Deaf and Blind (Section 13) and Public Buildings (Sections 14 and 24).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND INITIAL MANAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The project is approximately 11 air miles west of Whitefish and 0.75 mile northwest of Tally Lake. Access to the project area is via Farm-to-Market Road to Star Meadow Road; the proposed sale is at milemarker 6, approximately, on Star Meadow Road. The project area is 2.25 sections (1,440 acres) in size. The Star Meadow Road/USFS 60E Road intersection is near the northern edge of the project area.

According to records, logging and road building began in these sections in the early to mid-1920s. Portions of the project area have had harvesting in most of the decades since, with the last entry in 1997. Entries have ranged from regeneration to small salvage harvests.

Current forest stand conditions provide opportunities for regeneration of new stands, commercial thinning, and fire hazard reduction through removing dead and dying trees and reducing crown densities. The project area is within a wildland/urban-interface area; therefore, DNRC is concerned about fuel management.

The project would utilize existing roads and construct 2 or 3 temporary roads.

PROCESS

DNRC is in the initial stages of public scoping for the environmental analysis. The analysis would cover activities related to a harvest proposal of 2 to 3 million board feet of sawtimber, road improvements associated with harvesting, site preparation, and fuels reduction.

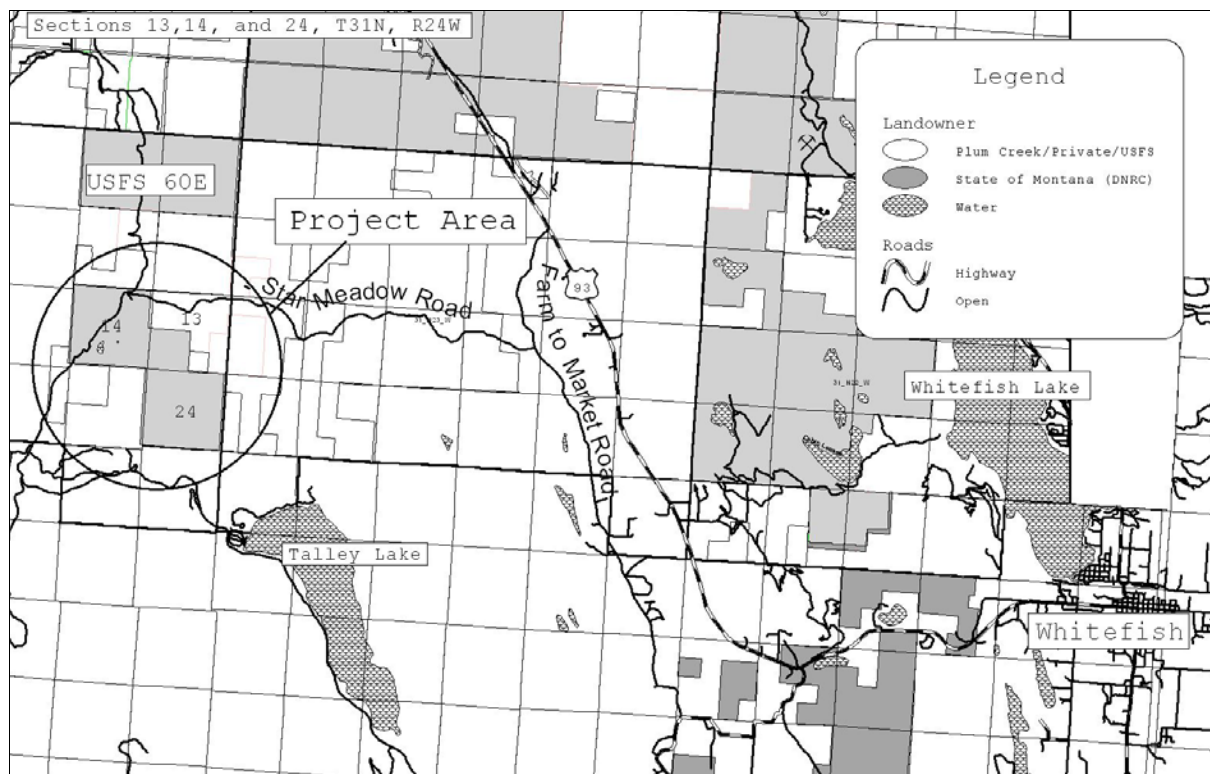
DNRC will accept your comments and concerns about the harvesting of timber and associated projects until July 16, 2006. Input from the public and specialists may influence the project design and

corresponding level of analysis. DNRC would also consider other opportunities that would produce long-term revenue on these sites if complete proposals were provided.

The following map delineates areas where harvesting opportunities have been identified in the project area, but is not intended to portray that all the acres displayed would be harvested with this proposal. After additional field reconnaissance by DNRC specialists (e.g. hydrologists, wildlife biologists, and foresters) and public input has been received, considerable adjustments of the location of proposed harvesting units may take place.

An interdisciplinary team including a hydrologist, wildlife biologist, and foresters will conduct analysis on the various resources that may be affected by a timber-harvesting project and draft an environmental analysis for the proposed actions.

PROPOSED SHORTS MEADOW/EVERS CREEK TIMBER SALE PROJECT VICINITY MAP



PROPOSED SHORTS MEADOW/EVERS CREEK TIMBER SALE PROJECT AREA MAP

